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ABSTRACT

This report provides the methodology, results, and highlights of a survey developed to assess general education satisfaction of graduates as well as to collect data essential to Nevada's Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) Performance Indicators. The Graduate Outcomes Survey is an annual questionnaire distributed to all TMCC students receiving degrees and certificates. Questions are designed to elicit information related to general instruction, educational atmosphere, technology-oriented education, degree-related employment, and variations in opinions and experiences by degree earned. The target population for this survey was all students graduating from TMCC in fall 1997, spring 1998 and summer 1998. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that they had attained their educational goals throughout their coursework at TMCC. Seventy-seven percent felt that TMCC provided adequate computer access to students, while 72% stated that instructional equipment adequately met student needs and demands. Approximately 80% of the students responding to the survey stated that they were currently employed. More than 40% of the graduates indicated employment in fields related to their degree. (JA)

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ED 443 474

GRADUATE OUTCOMES SURVEY

TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FALL 1998

D. Keller

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INTRODUCTION

This survey was designed to gather information regarding the educational experiences of TMCC graduates. The intent of the survey was not only to assess general educational satisfaction of graduates, but also to collect data essential to TMCC Performance Indicators. Questions were designed to elicit information related to general instruction and atmosphere, technology-oriented education, as well as degree-related employment. A further goal of this survey was to research student experiences based on the type of degree they earned. The Graduate Outcomes Survey is an annual questionnaire distributed to all TMCC students receiving degrees and certificates.

METHODOLOGY

Population: The target population for this survey was all students graduating from TMCC in Fall 1997, Spring 1998 and Summer 1998. This cohort of 1997-98 graduates was made up of 433 students. From this group of graduates, 302 usable surveys were returned, producing a 70% response rate.

Instrumentation & Procedure: The survey was designed as a two-paged scannable questionnaire consisting of approximately twenty questions. Surveys were distributed by the Admissions and Records Office to all students applying for graduation.

Data Analysis: The 302 surveys collected produced a statistically significant level of response (95% confidence level, ±3 margin of error). In other words, it is statistically sound to extrapolate the results of this survey to the entire population of graduating students (i.e. this sample adequately represents the population of 1997-98 TMCC graduates).

The presentation of results for this study are aimed at assessing the four major objectives related to this research: 1) satisfaction with general educational experiences, 2) satisfaction with technology-oriented experiences, 3) employment in degree-related fields, and 4) variations in opinions and experiences by degree earned.

RESULTS

Respondents to the 1997-98 Graduate Outcomes Survey looked favorably upon TMCC. Almost all (95%) of the graduates completing the survey felt that TMCC provided students with an educational atmosphere supportive of student learning. Furthermore, 89% of the respondents indicated that they had attained their educational goals throughout their coursework at TMCC. As a result, 91% of the students stated that they would recommend TMCC to a friend.

Satisfaction with technology-oriented instruction and experiences was slightly lower than the student assessment of overall educational experiences. Approximately 70% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with technology-oriented coursework, instruction, and equipment. More specifically, 77% felt that TMCC provided adequate computer access to students, while 72% stated that instructional equipment (i.e. computers, TV monitors, slides, maps, science materials) adequately met student needs and demands.

Approximately 80% of the students responding to the survey stated that they were currently employed. More than 40% of the graduates indicated

employment in fields related to their degree. The number of students who were employed did not differ between the academic degree earners (AA, AS, or AGS) and the vocational degree earners (AAS or Certificate); however, the vocational degree earners were more likely to hold degree-related jobs. Among the vocational degree students who were employed, 68% held a degree-related job.

Type of degree earned (vocational vs. academic) had little influence over student responses. However, a few noteworthy differences were found. Vocational degree earners were more likely to express satisfaction with technology-oriented courses, instruction, and facilities. Similarly, vocational students were slightly more likely to indicate that the educational environment at TMCC had given them a sense of belonging.

Highlights:

General Education Satisfaction

- 95% of the respondents stated that TMCC provided an educational atmosphere supportive of student learning and development.

➢ Nearly all of the respondents (96%) felt that they were given the opportunity to develop competency in the use of language, computation, and critical thinking.

➢ Three-quarters of the respondents believed that a sufficient number of courses were provided to meet the demands of students.

➢ More than 80% of the graduates responding agreed with the following indicators:

• instructors present information in a fair and objective manner, where opinions are clearly separated from facts and proven conclusions.

• TMCC faculty make a strong effort to help students succeeded academically.

• overall quality of instruction in most classes is excellent.

• instructors encourage students to express their own opinions.

Technical Education Satisfaction

➢ Nearly three-quarters of the respondents were satisfied with technology on the TMCC campuses.

➢ Between 50% and 77% of the respondents agreed with the following technology-oriented indicators:

• students are provided adequate access to computers on campus. (77%)

• TMCC offers a wide array of technology-oriented courses. (67%)

• instruction and equipment in technology-oriented courses is excellent. (50%)

• classroom facilities and learning resources are sufficiently meeting the needs and demands of students. (70%)

Miscellaneous

➢ 77% of the respondents stated that the social climate on the TMCC campus was sensitive to racial diversity, cultural differences, varying religious beliefs, and sexual orientations.

➢ 65% felt that the educational environment at TMCC had given them a sense of belonging.

➢ 88% of the respondents felt safe on the Dandini Campus, while 64% cited a feeling of safety on the Old Town Mall Campus (27% were either neutral of didn't know).

➢ 91% stated that they would recommend TMCC to a friend if given an opportunity.

Educational Goals and Employment

- 89% of the respondents felt that they had achieved their educational goals at TMCC.
- 77% cited some form of employment at the time of the survey, while 42% indicated that they were in a field related to their degree/certificate.